

COMMUNITY SERVICE NEWS

VOLUME VI

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1948

NUMBER 5

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Issued bimonthly except July and August by Community Service, Inc., Yellow Springs, Ohio, \$1.50 per year, 2 years \$2.50 (Foreign, \$2 and \$3). 35¢ per copy.

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THE DILEMMA OF COMMUNITY

The small community or primary group is one of the essentials of a sound society, but we are mistaken when we see it as the one essential.

The quality of society is determined largely by people's attitudes toward each other. Unless people like each other, respect each other, trust each other, share the good things of life together, help each other to bear burdens and hardships, and cooperate in work and in cultural expression, we do not have a good society. The spirit and the art of this mutuality is acquired early in life, and largely in primary group living. The family and the somewhat larger primary group—call it neighborhood, community, or what we will—where people have first-hand face-to-face relations, is the chief carrier of the tradition of this kind of relationship, a peculiarly effective medium and environment for the transmission and the perpetuation of the most essential part of our cultural inheritance.

This phase of our cultural tradition is so fundamental, and primary group relationships are so essential to its continuance, that we cannot see how there can be a stable, good society without primary groups as an essential part of its structure. No change in the form of society which we can envision will remove the need for that kind of social unit.

Yet there are other essential elements to a good society, some of which seem to undermine or to threaten the life and vigor of the primary group structure of society. Many vital needs of enlightened men cannot be satisfied within the primary group.

One essential quality of the cultural tradition is its striving for universality. No one community can originate all excellence. The great artist, the great scientist, the great religious or social leader becomes great only by inheriting the past and by building upon it. The more adequately he has acquired the essence of what has gone before, within the limits of his capacity to digest and to master it and not to be submerged by it, the more range, insight and quality there will be in his own creative effort. We must have communication, travel, transportation, publishing, and these call for vast activities and organization beyond the bounds of the primary group.

Any small community has within its boundaries only a few of the necessary resources of nature. Only by a far-flung organization of agriculture, mining, quarrying, forestry, fishing, manufacture and exchange can each small community get what it needs by supplying other communities what they need. Even relatively primitive community life cannot exist without some element of such exchange. Only the exceptional community possesses salt or iron or any one of many needs.

We have mentioned only two occasions for the large-scale organization of men—cultural diffusion and the exchange of resources. It is not necessary to give space to other elements, such as large-scale political organization, financial organization, or the provision of great libraries or research centers or other centers for making rare cultural resources generally available.

The resulting far-flung organization of modern life tends to so overshadow and dissolve or disrupt the small community or primary group that it tends to lose status and to disappear. Some people, recognizing the fundamental importance of the primary-group community to a sound society, and seeing its progressive weakening and disappearance before these large-scale movements, would turn men into primitive villagers. Others would give up the struggle for preservation of primary-group community values, however great and important they may have been in the past.

No one sees clearly how the fundamental and exceedingly important values of the small community as preserver and transmitter of the humane cultural tradition, and the far-flung organization of the modern world to give man mastery of nature and universality of outlook, can exist and thrive together. It almost seems that the conditions favorable to the vigorous growth of either are fatal to the other. Since it is large-scale action which now dominates the human scene, this state of affairs constitutes the dilemma of the community.

In the presence of big government, big business, big labor organization, standardized fashions, mass production of literature, the radio, movies, standardized education, standardized work, standardized recreation, and standardized national habits and outlook, nearly all of which ignore the primary-group community, what is the chance of keeping it alive and strong? In a good society what would be the relationship between large-scale activity and the small community or primary group? What part shall each play? Even if those questions could be clearly answered for today, the answers might not apply to conditions a generation hence in a world changing as rapidly and as greatly as ours.

What, then, should be the course of those who are interested in community? They can admit that they have no finished or clear design for the structure of society during the coming years. Perhaps no one has a picture in mind of society as it actually will be, just as no one two centuries ago had a foreview of society as it is today.

We can strive to keep alive the community spirit and structure which now exists, and try to sublimate it, strengthen it and enlarge it. This element of continuity is vital. If the quality of community should die, it might never again find the conditions favorable for its rebirth and vigorous maturing.

We can constantly explore for ways in which community can live and thrive in the modern world, and we can explore as to what elements of the modern world are favorable to community and what elements are opposed to it.

We can try to make the world aware of the great significance of primary-group community life. Only if people are aware of its vital importance will they make place for it in their plans. We can try constantly to work out the ways and means of community, and to develop communities which are examples of its possibilities. A good community achieved in reality has four kinds of value. It is worth while in and of itself. In the process of its development lessons are learned as to how to be successful in community building. A successful community may

become a model for others. And finally, the fact of the existence of a good community gives faith and courage and interest in community building.

We can keep our minds open. We can honestly and critically inquire as to the validity and importance of our ideas about community. It might be that in some degree our great cultural inheritance may find other media for its preservation and transmission, and that other forms of society may have the values we now find in community. I do not see such forms emerging, but community never should become a fetish. It should be only a means for the fulfillment of the possibilities of life.

—Arthur E. Morgan

INDIVIDUALITY IN COMMUNITY

Individuality in community has been pointed out by A. N. Whitehead as a fundamental aspect of life, the very topic of religion. An expression currently used in relation both to democracy and to Christianity is that of the sacredness of the individual, the idea that the individual is the end of society. This is a natural reaction to the idea that the individual exists for the state. A recent example appears in the January 15, 1948 *Interpreter*, which editorially defends Willis Nutting, author of *Reclamation of Independence*. He insists, in the editor's words, "on each family producing by and for themselves, their own *necessaries*—food, clothing, and shelter. It is dependence on others for *these* items which determines a family's subjection; it is through direct production of these that a family wins not only its independence, but its creative work, its self-reliant character-forming habits, its recreation, its health, its unity and solidarity."

In Western society, whether decentralist or the opposite, there is a tendency to go to the extreme of "atomizing" society. Idealizing the society of pioneer America, we overlook the instability inherent in its lack of community development. One of the most valuable observations about human society that has come from the study of anthropology is one by Paul Radin, that in primitive society the individual and the community each is inviolate beyond a certain limit, that the configuration and integrity of neither is submerged or overstepped by the other. Both are submerged in the greater reality that transcends them. This remarkable trait of primitive society of combining the freedom and individuality of "anarchy" and the responsibility and solidarity of "ethical communism" has been considered by Stefansson and by others as the great social achievement of primitive man. Such a combination of freedom and social order is an essential condition for a good and stable human society.

Decentralism must not mean economic isolation or it will lose its merit. The solution is not to repudiate economic interrelatedness, but to subdue technology so that it will serve human purpose and maintain biological and cultural health.

Economic isolation and self-sufficiency has no necessary relation to decentralization. A decentralist society may have, and often has had, a high order of

economic intercourse. The specialization of function in medieval England was highly developed on a decentralized basis. Even today we have a similar economy inherited from the Mayan civilization in Guatemala, where to the market towns each valley and region brings its own characteristic product and buys products of other communities to take home. So stable and independent is this economy that a prominent writer, J. P. McEvoy, recently declared that he would choose it in preference to others as most likely to weather the coming years of potential warfare and crisis. Ancient Greece, made up of many tiny, separate kingdoms, which had intense interrelatedness in sea trade to the ends of the earth, is another example.

Economic and cultural isolation go together. Cultural decentralization and vigorous growth of local and regional cultures are much to be desired. But even local and regional cultures depend upon regional and local economic intercourse. Without intercourse culture rapidly stagnates, and with rare exceptions cultural intercourse has depended upon and gone hand in hand with economic intercourse. Life is one, and its parts inevitably accompany one another.

Much economic specialization is fundamentally *economical*: so much so that scarcely any significant group of people could be mustered who would wilfully turn their backs upon it. Also much economic life is only apparently of value and really is uneconomical. A major undertaking for our times is the development of a truly economical way of life for the modern family, community and regional economy. We must learn to distinguish, choose and eliminate. We must act with temperate discrimination in supporting or rejecting technological developments such as electrical appliances, agricultural implements, and production machinery. An emotional rejection of all is of the same order as the prevailing uncritical acceptance of all that goes in the name of "progress."

—Griscom Morgan

In all the disasters that have darkened the recent decades there has been none to equal the loss of a sense of personal worth which has overwhelmed Western man. "Little man, what now?" Experience and history have joined in that mocking cry. The rapid urbanization of Western life has all but destroyed that individualism which was the glory of the days of handicraft. Men are lost in the mob, lost in their jobs, lost in a society which seems daily to grow more impersonal and indifferent. They not only do not have the sense of controlling the environment which fixes the pattern of their lives; they cannot even understand it. When they cry out it is likely to be against a vast, inchoate something which they call "the system." They think of themselves as victims of "the system," or its helpless pawns. The soul of Western man is in danger of being suffocated in the mass.—From an editorial, "Hunger for a Personal Faith," in the *Christian Century*, September 15, 1948.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS IN THE SMALL COMMUNITY

by Ralph Templin

Some years ago Ross, one of America's leading sociologists, studied social organizations which had existed longest. He came out with his "five canons of social survival." Though each deals with a special concern, all five also share in a general concern which has seemed even more significant. It may be summed up in this way: That social structure which gives enough place to individuality, but not too much, and at the same time enough place to group organization, but not too much—such social structure may exist, so long as it can retain such balance, for even thousands of years. Village organization in certain parts of the world, such as the *Jajmani* of the Indian village, illustrates the possibility of such endurance. Such organization everywhere, so far as I know, is characterized chiefly by some interesting blend of independence of the individual with the interdependence of the group worked out in intimate terms. I want to raise two questions: What is the part that the small community plays in this element of social survival? Granting that it is necessary to restore the small community, what would be the means which can help us in a conscious quest for community?

If a line is drawn to represent the possible swing from all organization to no organization in human relations, somewhere along in the middle part of that line would be a range which would represent the norm. Within that range human life could arrange its affairs, satisfying both individual fulfillment and group fulfillment perpetually: provided it was able to remain always within those bounds. I do not believe it is possible to fix the limits of that norm for human existence. It may be all the more inexorable because of that indistinctness. Its importance is more likely to be overlooked. Now what I think the evidence shows is that it is the small community alone which can keep human relationships within that range for survival.

This is not the first age which has pyramided its structure of social organization into highly centralized urban life in terms of what was believed to be "progress." It is probably not the first which has *worshipped* progress. It may be the first such civilization able to temper such external development with a more refined inner development which we may well suppose characterizes both the evolution and the survival of the human species. But if this proves possible it can only be as the result of conscious intelligent grasp of those more subtle qualities of spirit and culture and conscious organization of society in terms of their enhancement.

The fact is that, so far, human life persists upon the earth and has survived with its culture not through all such progress or because of it, but definitely in spite of it. In all cases where the small community round about has itself not survived, as with the recently uncovered vast city civilization of the Indus Valley in India, the culture itself with even all records has tended to disappear. The hypothesis which best fits all the facts is probably something like this: An age which blindly worships "progress" almost certainly comes finally to interpret it

in material terms. Such progress is most likely to move toward the all-organization extreme. But it may also under certain conditions swing violently from extreme to extreme. Survival is probably with those groups which for some reason (it may be a mere accident of stern necessity) are able to remain in a balanced position unmoved by such swings to the all-organization or no-organization extremes. They are probably wholly unconscious of the fact that the future of civilization, and even of progress itself, are in their keeping.

Let us examine the status of our democratic society against this background. Harry W. Culbreth left the New Deal administration as one of its cooperative analysts in 1939 for two years of research into the status of democracy wherever at least the name still remains. His report of that study which is available in mimeographed form was read before the Ohio Welfare Conference at Columbus, Ohio, in 1940. Even in Sweden, "the most advanced democracy in civilization," he found the individual "intensely frustrated." He has no unifying purpose. He is very social in that he is loyal to many organizations, but he is not integrated socially. Conscious integration is lacking, he discovered, even in families of Sweden.

Coming back to the United States, the main object of his research, he reaches an important conclusion. In early American life community integration was not consciously sought, but was abundantly present as an accident of the struggle to survive. The three basic human needs were met—physical needs, social needs, and psychological needs. Using Arthur Morgan's striking figure, the first provided the "goose yoke" which forced the second—intimacy and mutuality; this in turn made the third, psychological integration, within a safe measure, inevitable.¹ The methods used were "haphazard" and the whole structure grew out of the stern necessity which our pioneering fathers and mothers faced.

As time went on this "haphazard" solution of human problems gave way in the first two areas of basic need to conscious, widespread organization. Our conscious satisfaction of material needs we call economic life. Meanwhile, we have also consciously organized the need for functional action into an equally vast aggregation of social organizations. But these conscious advances at the same time released life from the "goose yoke"—from the stern necessity which had bound life into community. Culbreth adds, "Since [people] did not understand that certain basic needs were being satisfied through their spontaneous community relationships with each other, they made no conscious efforts to retain them. This has resulted in the disintegration of local communities." Here is a picture of a sick democracy—perhaps, without our knowing it, sick unto death.

The problem thus presented to us Culbreth expresses as that of *helping the individual's basic need for psychological intimacy to evolve into consciousness.*

¹Arthur E. Morgan, "What Is Community?" Mimeographed address, delivered at Community Church, Columbus, Ohio, May 7, 1946.

This would mean a conscious quest for the vital elements native to small community life. It is this task I am addressing myself to, when I state the importance of the fellowship group, for our time and need, in its relation to the small community.

We are likely to think that communities are something that are inescapable for human beings, that they always have and always will exist in some form. But that is because we use the term community so loosely that it can mean almost anything having to do with human juxtaposition. We can then think that we serve the purposes of "community" when we are really only further serving to fulfill the economic and social areas, where man is already in conscious control. It is in this sense that man can be a "joiner"; as Culbreth expresses it, he can be very social without being integrated socially. Thus, all the more, by what we think is our community effort, we neglect or rob the psychological area of human integration where "democratic" man is already speeding rapidly toward futility, chaos, and perhaps even the destruction of his civilization. Samson, his eyes gouged out, taunted and stung to desperation, may be an apt symbol of modern man in the temple of his western civilization. He strains between his two great pillars, science and social organization. The final war may seem to him glorious by comparison with his frustration and growing insignificance in the modern world.

I wonder if we are able to realize, for all the chorus of great minds warning us, how very perilous is our position in our increasing resort to coercive statist answers to this modern human dilemma. Has there ever been, within historical perspective, an age so wasting its time in sheer, stupid futility, both in national and international affairs—in the light of this blind spot of all democratic society?

There has been no clearer statement of this futility than that by England's great religious leader, Canon Demant. Writing under the subtitle, "When the Sense of Community Sags," he warned that "men will not work their civilization—except by compulsion. The naked individual confronts the naked state, with no community in between. . . . You cannot expect men to feel responsibility in global relations when their sense of significance and loyalty is undermined in the smaller areas of life."²

What I am proposing is that life in the fellowship group be regarded as the means, for our time, for revitalizing small communities and thus restoring democracy. There is hope strong enough to heal our sense of futility, in understanding of the fact that both the evil of our age and the cure are psychological—bound up in human personal disintegration and integration; all the more intimate and real hope, in the fact that the process can begin at once in us and around us in our immediate environment.

²V. A. Demant, "The Breakdown of Civilization," *Christian Century*, September 10, 1947.

But this will not be possible if we conclude that because the problem and the answer are psychological, it is therefore a purely "spiritual" fellowship that is needed. This would mean to try to work it out in a vacuum, and that is impossible. It is this which Christian contemplative groups are most in peril of. The answer must be in terms of fellowship which concerns itself with the whole of human living, fellowship which involves integration of life as its central aim. An effort to cultivate fellowship apart from doing together things which have to do with making life better would be as futile as the effort to do things together for betterment without fellowship. The former would suffer from the defect of all stratosphere religion, the latter would be what we now have in large measure which has produced our frustration.

A fellowship group has been defined as "a small voluntary association for a distinctive purpose, as contrasted to the small community, which is a general-purpose, total-living-together association."³

Fellowship groups, by whatever name, have probably pioneered every gain in humanity's community adventure

"Since the first man stood God-conquered
With his face to heaven upturned."

It is the business of the fellowship group to save community to society, often even to save community from itself in many ways. The answer to our present problem of community, both in its local aspect and in its international aspect of world community, is no exception to this. If fellowship groups will multiply round the world, taking as their distinctive aim the setting forth of the community purpose itself, they can be "salt" and "light" of the earth to this generation of men. People must be led into the conscious acceptance of small community life as the way of human satisfaction and fulfillment and as the way of social survival.

Such a movement will be not unlike many of the most significant movements in history which sought their own great ends in identical ways. The Christian church in the first century, the Anabaptist movement, and the Friends' societies are just a few of such fellowship group movements, well-timed in history. The fellowship groups now needed must drive straight at the community task "for all in all things"—the watchword of the new movement in India of the intimate followers of Gandhi launched since his death.

"Sharing a Rule," by John Oliver Nelson, in *motive* for may 1948, describes the Kirkridge fellowship, a group of Protestant laymen and ministers who maintain a "community discipline" and a center near Bangor, Pennsylvania. Reprints are available from Joseph Platt, Bangor, Pa., and from Community Service, Inc.

³Arthur Morgan, "The Fellowship Group as the Way to a New Society," address at Institute of International Relations, Antioch College, July 1945.

"Unitarian Fellowship Units" are being established to provide fellowship by local meetings, correspondence, literature, and occasional visiting for persons who are isolated from large groups of Unitarians. Wherever a little handful of Fellowship members live in the same community, by meeting together regularly and by reinforcing each other's purpose they can keep alive the fire of purpose and aspiration. The headquarters of the Unitarian Fellowship are at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

A "Conference on the Cell Group," led by D. Elton Trueblood, John Oliver Nelson, Ross Snyder, DeWitt Baldwin, Dan West, and others, was held at the University of Michigan on October 23, 1948. Attention was given to the role of fellowship groups in communities, local churches, colleges, and summer service projects. A report of the conference is being prepared and can be ordered from the Student Religious Association, Lane Hall, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Some of us remember the first fortnight of the Community in 1938, when a group composed of parsons and craftsmen found themselves pledged to live together The Faith, as applied not to leisure hours but to the whole round day, erecting the first huts. It was a terrific strain! All the parsons, including the writer, were concerned to show ourselves by every act "he-men," "natural," not high-falutin', good carpenters. The intention was right; but we were doing it to be seen of men. What was worse was the constant efforts of the craftsmen to behave in terms of what they presumed to be essential attributes of parsons! We had known them long before as natural and intimate friends. (Not at all was the issue one of class, then or now.) But what transformation was now upon them! They were in a "religious community" so they must be "different": walk softly; mention no conceivable subject on which anyone might with passion differ; laugh moderately, after full assurance that it was a laughing matter; and move generally as if some grapeshot had lodged in their spine and never been removed. Only a row could clear such mutual artificiality. And after it we became a community of very ordinary men, who knew it, said it, and thereby began to grow.—George MacLeod, *We Shall Rebuild: The Work of the Iona Community on Mainland and on Island* (The Iona Community, Publishing Department, Community House, 214 Clyde St., Glasgow, Cl.).

"Cooperative Funeral Associations" by James Myers Jr. is published by the Cooperative League of the U.S.A., 343 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill. This is a guide for the organization and management of cooperative funeral organizations. A list of more than fifty such organizations is included.

He who sows the ground with care and diligence acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by the repetition of 10,000 prayers.—Zoroaster.

EDUCATION FOR COMMUNITY

*News and Information
on Residential Adult Education and the People's College*

Edited by GRISCOM and JANE MORGAN

FOLK SCHOOLS TAKE ROOT IN MANITOBA*

by John Friesen

*"The unwritten theme of every folk school is the
progressive citizen in the cooperative community"*

It was on a bleak morning in November, 1940, that a very young but courageous leader boldly pushed open the creaking door of a rural church hall and announced to a small group of farm youth that the first Manitoba Federation of Agriculture Folk School was informally opened. Everything about the place seemed out of joint. There was no cook; the townfolk were somewhat reluctant to billet students for a course whose purpose they did not understand. Even Federation officers were not certain what was to happen next, and the director of the school dared not increase their doubts by admitting that the program would develop spontaneously as the course progressed.

Before many minutes had passed, however, the group of young strangers were casting off their shyness by taking active part in a round of singing, folk dancing, and in planning the week's work. Playing, studying, living together, they were soon telling each other how much they had in common. In this way, as one farm leader observed: "Confidence is engendered, suspicion gives way to trust, and we gradually grow together as a group with common interests and common problems."

At the close of the week, the students issued invitations to the neighborhood to attend the neighbor night. Many a surprised look stole over the faces of the guests as they sat down to a carefully planned banquet. At the concert which followed, the class proudly demonstrated its ability at public speaking, original skits and musical numbers. By the time folk dancing had commenced, the entire audience found themselves carried away by the spirit of the school. After the last quartette had "harmonized" and the final farewells been said by the new friends, a tired but happy director meditated long on the scene of her first folk school venture. Students, parents and visitors had pronounced it an unqualified success.

*Reprinted from *Food for Thought* (Canadian Assn. for Adult Education, 340 Jarvis St., Toronto 5, Canada), October 1948.

From such beginnings, the folk schools have grown until they have become a force in youth education, and the major educational project of the Manitoba Federation of Agriculture and Co-operation. A Western Canadian adaptation of the Scandinavian pattern, and more particularly of the traveling folk schools in Sweden, the M.F.A.C. project benefited by several experiments of a similar nature held in 1939 under the direction of youth leaders of the United Farmers of Ontario.

As is true for the European schools, Manitoba's folk schools owe much to their directors. Two young women, almost entirely self-trained, saw the great potentiality of the folk school approach for rural youth education. In their opinion, education and inspiration go hand in hand. Helen Watson often quoted a passage which, one may add, best described her own efforts: "He who has only vision is a visionary; he who has only program is a drudge; but he who has both vision and program is a conquerer." When the going was hard, Helen Matheson found new courage by "putting on a bold face and remembering that 'I believed in fairies.'"

Following its early experiences, the folk school gradually evolved its present stated objectives:

- to awaken a community consciousness and a feeling that young people have a part to play in molding society;
- to develop an understanding of the cooperative movement in its economic aspects;
- to demonstrate cooperative living through group experiences;
- to develop the individual's confidence through public speaking and participation in community endeavors;
- to imbue the students with the will to study for action; in all activities to create a spirit of genuine fellowship through significant social experiences.

While promotion by the provincial staff is an important requisite, the co-operation of the local community has come more to the fore as a primary factor in the successful planning of a folk school. The local committee provides the building, facilities, and billets, and assists with publicity. Hence, the most easily organized schools are generally in communities having active cooperatives or Federation leadership. These organizations often assist in paying the dollar-a-day student fee (which includes board and room). Apart from staffing, therefore, the annual cost of the schools to the provincial organization is very little.

The folk school is for out-of-school folks. Men and women between the ages of sixteen and thirty may attend. Variations in enrollment (from twelve to thirty-five students) are reported, with twenty considered ideal. If the group is smaller, student relations may appear somewhat "cool," especially on opening days. A larger school is not as flexible or intimate a group, and is more inclined to develop cliques.

The program of the school focuses on group living. Student council, team captains and discussion group leaders help to ensure maximum participation. The home atmosphere contributes in no small way towards achieving an intimate

"family" relationship. The house mother, for instance, is selected both for her ability to prepare tasty meals and for a motherly interest in young people.

The social experience is an exciting one for the group, and often a novel one for the less aggressive individuals. Boys and girls of varied ethnic backgrounds learn to share opinions freely. The backward student is encouraged to express his ideas. Activities become vital and "soulful": the school becomes a living organism.

The unwritten theme of every folk school is the progressive citizen in the cooperative community. Among the courses at the one-week school are soil conservation, cooperatives, health, farm and home improvement and rural education. Public speaking is given particular emphasis. The discussion method is used throughout, and the weekly Farm Radio Forum hour is utilized as a practical example of this technique.

As is true for the Scandinavian schools, the M.F.A.C. groups create an atmosphere of comradeship through the bond of music. Director and students are convinced that "a sung contract is more binding than a written one." Equally popular are the folk dances, which are usually preferred to modern dancing.

The folk school considers the community as its home and resource center. The neighbor night is only one example of this relationship. In visiting and studying the neighborhoods, the young adults are made aware of community needs and potentialities. Local residents are likewise stimulated by the discussions growing out of contacts with students and staff. The whole experience makes for better understanding of farm youth by village and town folk, and boldly points out the need for further training in youth leadership.

A week spent in a residential school introduces its members to the programs sponsored by the Federation and by participating organizations in and outside of the community. A number of each class return a second and even a third time to attend other folk schools. In answer to the need for a more intensive course of studies, the Federation has recently launched a series of Advanced Leadership Schools. The four-point program followed in these three-week classes includes practical and general studies in social, economic, cultural, agricultural and physical education. Competent instructors in these various fields participate in the advanced courses.

Looking to the future, the young people are laying plans for the establishment of a permanent folk school in Manitoba. While this will entail considerable organization and financial support, all will agree that the permanent school is essential in the overall program for farm youth.

The positive influence of the folk schools is felt in many ways. Although a large percentage of students, during the senior high school years, will continue to leave agriculture for other occupational pursuits, the folk schools can point to an impressive group of active leaders in rural life who have received invaluable training by voluntary participation in these short courses. An increasing

number are taking their places on district and provincial boards of the farm organization, while the M.F.A.C. Youth Board continues to be a major force in improving and expanding the youth work within the Federation.

The main influence of these schools, however, is not contingent upon the length of the school term or subject matter. Folk schools are significant for the enthusiasm aroused in the students for the cooperative way of life. Student reports repeatedly stress these values. Here, often for the first time, idealistic youth discovers how to apply its energies in meeting the challenge to build a better community.

Considering the varied ethnic and community backgrounds of the members, one sees in the folk school a valuable experience for citizenship. Racial discrimination and religious differences are discussed with a good-natured frankness which, at times, surprises even the director.

The folk school is deeply rooted in the soil of the family farm. A love of rural life and recognition of the dignity of toil are fostered. The school is educating the student not away from, but toward his farming community.

Finally, the larger cooperative ideals, emphasized in group discussions, help to broaden the outlook of the individual. The fact that students insist on being concerned with both the social and the economic aspects of cooperation is one expression of the desire to learn "what humanity is trying to do, and acquiring a will to join in doing it." It is not too much to say that the M.F.A.C. folk schools reflect, in some measure, the spirit engendered by the Danish schools of which Sir Richard Livingstone wrote: "The individual becomes part of a larger pattern and a spirit grows up which checks selfishness, encourages men to feel themselves members of a community, and makes cooperation not only possible but natural.

A group of persons from various rural organizations in Ontario have been planning an approach to rural folk schools of one-week duration for the coming winter. They are following the Manitoba example. It is expected that Ontario Farm Radio Forum will have one person working full time this winter on the project. The objective is to conduct several one-week schools for rural young people in different parts of the province. A special school is planned at the farm of Mr. and Mrs. John Madsen in Unionville.—*Food for Thought*, October 1948.

Those who have found interest and inspiration from reading *The Peckham Experiment*, the book about the London community center, the "Pioneer Health Center," will be glad to know that a 22-minute film about it is available from the British Information Service, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N.Y. The rental charge is \$3.75 for one showing. The film is 16mm sound.

The book, *Health the Unknown*, by John Comerford (London, Hamish Hamilton), is also about the Peckham experiment. Community Service, Inc., hopes to have copies available for sale. It is a short, 144-page popular version of the *Peckham Experiment*. There is also available an 18-page bulletin on the Center.

POPULATION

WISCONSIN GIRLS GO TO TOWN—AND THE BOYS FOLLOW

Extracts from an address, "Recent Population Changes in Rural Wisconsin,"

by George W. Hill

Department of Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin, at the
Annual Extension Conference, December 12, 1946.

The soil, humus, rainfall, and flora, all of these we have learned to our sorrow are not expendable. People are! At least so we continue to promote our agricultural policy. Is this a harsh statement? Let's try to get at the facts. . . .

I think I can make my point clear from citing some figures gathered in Waushara county this summer. Of the families where the heads were over fifty both husband and wife came from families where there were 4.2 brothers and sisters. In contrast, they themselves had three children, and their children, when married, had an average of only 1.5 offspring. . . . In other words, in three generations the number of children per family will have been more than halved.

Therefore, let's divorce ourselves, as hard as it is, from the old stereotypes we have concerning the size of farm families. They used to be large, they used to have children sufficient for every type of task that the farm required. But not now! . . .

In 1940 the replacement rate was 1.25. In other words, from the farms of the state as a whole, there were 3,052 more young men in their twenties who came into the work group, than passed out through age or death. In 1950, the rate will have dropped 31.2 percent to 0.86, leaving an "excess" of 2,360.

We know, however, that we lose men out of the twenty- to sixty-year group through other means than death or age. Some migrate to urban jobs. If we allow for migration, and here is our one and only assumption, we assume that the rate of off-farm migration in the years 1940 to 1950 will be equal to that which obtained in the decade 1930 to 1940 (and there is every reason to believe it will be greater), then the male replacement rate for 1950 drops to 0.11. This means an excess of only 315. . . . None of the counties in the highest economic quartile will produce excess males in 1950; they will all show deficits; all of the excess will occur in counties of the lowest income quartile. This simply means that farmers in the high income counties will not have any "son-power" to give to neighboring farmers who may not have given birth to a son, or who may have lost him through death or migration. . . .

All boys in the 'teen-age group stayed in farming. With the girls, we find the reverse . . . a loss of 16.2 percent of the 'teen-age girls through migration.

When we move up 5 years in age, and start with the 10- to 14-year-olds in 1930, and see what happened to them by the time they would have been 20 to 24 in 1940, there is still another change. Among the boys there was an off-farm migration of 10,440, or 19.1 percent. In the same years 22,358 girls migrated, a loss of 43.3 percent. Boys apparently do not migrate as early as girls, but neither

do the girls slow down as they mature. In fact, their rate of migration takes on the proportions of a stampede. . . .

We should return for a moment to the young men and women aged 20 to 24 in 1940. In that year we had 43,361 men of those ages on our farms, and only 28,558 young women—a difference of 14,803. This leaves one in three of the young men on farms with no chance of marriage with farm girls. Now, you can double the size of the farms on which these one third live, you can give them two tractors in place of one, but I'll wager my last dollar that you won't keep many of these boys on the farm. They have biological and social drives which they can't repress. . . .

We have heard a lot about city growth. This growth has not been a simple one. There are some odd developments in it. Take the cities of Racine and Kenosha, for example. They didn't increase. On the contrary, they lost 1.6 percent and 0.5 percent in population respectively between 1930 and 1940. But the non-city zone within their metropolitan area gained 34.9 percent in the same decade, and the rural farm population in the metropolitan district likewise gained 36.9 percent. . . .

With more than half of our counties losing between 45 and 60 percent of their 20- to 24-year-old girls in the past decade, it's time that we began to think of human conservation. Without these girls there won't be many farmer marriages, and whatever bachelors may be worth otherwise, they won't long assure us an agricultural population.

The exodus of youth is not something that we can complacently relegate to the status of a "youth problem." Youth are only reacting to a basic dissatisfaction with farming. That this dissatisfaction is only a reflection upon the earning power of farming, I doubt, because counties in the high farm income class are throwing off a third to a half of their 20- to 24-year-old girls annually. . . .

It seems to me we need to look inwards to see if our approaches to farmers are still sound. Certainly surveys, or a superficial organization around ill-defined community or neighborhood leaders, or a removal of the low-income farmers are all insufficient bases for action programs.

Revolutionary population changes, and they are truly revolutionary, such as those Wisconsin farmers are now going through, are symptomatic of basic social change. This change reflects national and international trends, but if we admit this, shouldn't we commit ourselves to a re-evaluation of the goals of farming? And it seems to me these goals are expressed not in poundage of milk produced, nor in livestock numbers, nor in acreages harvested, but ultimately in the sentiments, in the attitudes, and in the values of farm folk. Is our approach to farmers now so geared that our educational efforts are responsive to the temper and the needs of the time as reflected in these values? . . . A maturing state calls for a production policy and an educational program that will look to the conservation and revitalizing of agriculture's greatest and irreplaceable resource—its people!

PRESENT BIRTH RATES AND LONG-TIME TRENDS

The small town and the rural community are vitally important for the future, partly for a purely objective reason—that in the long run they are the major source of future population. Those skeptics who ignore all but economic values, who see in the trend to the city a “wave of the future” to which we must acquiesce irrespective of what urban life does to the human being, have found least answerable the fact that cities have always committed race suicide.

Recently prominent notice has been given to the suggestion by some demographers that current population trends are reversing those of the past, that perhaps cities are going to more adequately maintain their population, and that college-educated people may cease to have far fewer children than people who have failed to finish grade school. Because of the importance of this subject we shall review in some detail an important publication of the U.S. Department of Commerce, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, No. 18. We quote from this report:

“The present survey deals with fertility in the period from April, 1942, to April, 1947. Comparison of these figures with those from an earlier survey covering the period from June, 1941, to June, 1946, indicates that the spectacular rise in the birth rate in late 1946 and early 1947 is due very largely to the demobilization of men from the armed forces. The fertility of nonveterans and their wives actually declined during late 1946 and early 1947, although these couples had large numbers of children during the war.”

The report goes on to show that since the period 1935-1940 was one of very low fertility, the war years, with their better job and income opportunity, permitted temporarily high birth rates among the many people who were waiting and ready for the better opportunity to have families. Another factor is also suggested: “The increase in the average number of children . . . may possibly reflect births ‘borrowed’ from the future. . . . That is, they may not be indicative of any permanent increase in the number of children the women will have during their lifetimes. For the age group 30 to 39 years, however, such a statement cannot be made. . . . There is little doubt that there has been some gain in the prevalence of families of moderate size at the expense of smaller families among women 30 to 39 years old in urban areas. The data are not necessarily indicative of any trend towards more children during the lifetime of the average woman, but they do show that there were more young children per mother in 1947 than in 1940.” Having children is a good deal a matter of “style,” and a style affects people in their thirties as well as in their twenties.

Now, as to the birth rates of cities, the report states that “In the recent period, the urban population, for the first time in many decades, had a net reproduction rate that was in excess of the replacement level. . . . It is not anticipated that the urban population will maintain the high level of fertility achieved during the war and postwar period, but opinions differ as to whether it will revert to a level as low as that reached during the late depression, when

the urban population was faced with a potential decline of about 25 percent per generation if migration from rural areas ceased. Between 1940 and 1947, the gain for the United States in number of children under 5 years old per 1000 women 15 to 49 years old was about 31 percent. The increase for urban areas, about 47 percent, was roughly four times the gain for rural-farm areas, about 12 percent." But the ranking between farm, rural non-farm, and city remains the same, the city fertility standing now at about three quarters that of the farm.

In view of the already declining fertility of nonveterans, the trend back toward race suicide of the city seems certain.

The changed birth rates in relation to educational status are similar to those in relation to rural and urban residence—where there was most room for an increase in birth rate the increase was most felt. The report finds that "The increase was relatively greater among the groups with higher educational attainment. As a result, fertility differentials among the groups have narrowed, at least temporarily. . . . It would seem that such factors as increased income of potential husbands since 1940 and more opportunities for the employment of married women have encouraged more of the well-educated women to marry and married women to have their children while times are good." The relative reproduction rates for children under five per thousand women are as follows: For parents with 5-6 years grade school: in 1940, 405; in 1947, 477. For parents with four years high school: in 1940, 218; in 1947, 323. For parents with four years college: in 1940, 153; in 1947, 271. Thus in 1947 practically all groups of women as classified by educational attainment were reproducing themselves, whereas in 1940 that was true only of those women who went no further than grade school. Such has been the influence of a sudden full employment, together with the influence of other intangibles such as a purpose to make life meaningful.

The question is, will these higher birth rates endure if full employment continues? In other words, if we remove the economic influence of the depression (the removal of which awaits the use of economic principles already developed), what would be the birth rate pattern? This question is raised against the background of the steady decline in urban birth rates from 1905 until 1938, an ever-increasing reproductive deficiency. In regard to this question this report states: "It is difficult to distinguish between the effect of early family completion (which has caused the decline in birth rate of nonveterans) and the possibility that the postwar decline in the number of children among nonveterans of each age may foreshadow a resumption of the long-standing decline in the birth rates of the nation as a whole. Temporary declines, of course, will occur as families of veterans attain a near-normal size. In fact . . . the nation's birth rate, though still high, declined sharply in the last few months of the period."

Thus we have evidence that the urban birth rate did increase when good employment opportunities prevailed, but whether that increase is more than a temporary catching up, and whether the urban birth rate will soon continue its long decline, we do not know. Moreover, for the more important question

we have no answer: What will happen to the birth rates of second- and third-generation city-dwellers? Will the present boom in babies, which is partly a matter of "style," bring a reaction when the obligations and difficulties of large urban families become more apparent, especially in the presence of urban enervating stresses? The specialists in population as well as the laymen are at a loss for the answer.

—Griscom Morgan

A SUGGESTION TOWARD A THEORY OF POPULATION

It may be instructive at this time to inquire why the recent upsurge in national birth rates took place. For without such understanding we are left in the dark as to the forces that will operate in the future, or how to achieve any degree of social control over this explosive issue of our times.

The influences upon birth rates are many, but the present era gives us an excellent opportunity to observe certain dominant influences in active operation. This is especially true since the rise in birth rates is nearly world-wide, and some uniformity probably exists in its causes. But for the world-wide influence of the war, we might suspect one of those cyclic phenomena by which the affairs of lower animals and men are found to be strongly affected. Reviewing the causes that seem to have operated, we see that there has been no world-wide improvement in nourishment to cause the increased birth rates that Malthusian theory would suggest. For among starving European people the birth rate has markedly increased. Bad housing might account for the increased birth rate but for the fact that in Switzerland and Sweden the housing problem has not become notably worse. Nor has the greater security of job tenure resulting from full employment in America been world-wide. A sense of insecurity has become more rather than less general.

Probably the most general influence to cause the rise in birth rates is the world-wide depression in the cultural and moral standard of living, causing a diversion of creative energies to a more primal level of outlets. This change can be easily seen in some areas of Europe today. Whereas in the past people had a greater control over their world, and had high standards of community obligations to live up to and to occupy their creative energies, today most areas of responsibility and creative outlets are blocked, leaving procreation, in the largest sense of the word, the remaining free outlet. In America we have sometimes thought of buying a car or a gadget as being only an economic alternative to having children; but it is also a creative alternative. Such creative alternatives to procreation have been especially influential among urban and educated people. When the satisfaction of the craving for such material or cultural values becomes blocked, procreation is turned to. During the war the subtlety and sublimation in the use of creative energies broke down throughout the world, and in occupied Europe today it is not uncommon for women of the intellectual middle class to deliberately seek to have illegitimate children for their own sake, a primal outlet for their life energies.

The influence of social breakdown upon birth rates has been demonstrated many times in the past, varying, however, greatly. The loss of community has resulted in race suicide among some primitive people. On the other hand, the breakdown of social organization in England resulting from the enclosure system created a condition similar to that in Europe today, wherein the birth rate of English people increased tremendously amidst terrible hardship. The decline of the Indian village organization under English rule was also coincident to the breakdown of cultural restraints upon the Indian birth rate, and India's terrific overpopulation followed after.*

The influence of community culture upon birth rates is likewise to be seen in the history of Europe and of America. As the Catholic church penetrated Europe more than a thousand years ago, it augmented Europe's population by abolishing the traditional restraints upon an excessive birth rate. The exceedingly high birth rate of pioneer North America may be partly attributed to the social isolation and cultural poverty of its people. So famished were they for creative outlets that the revival movement went to extremes in satisfying deep-seated needs that otherwise had only procreation to satisfy them.

In healthy, well-disciplined societies controls over population have commonly existed, according to Carr-Saunders and some other population experts. These controls have tended to prevent extremes of either underpopulation or of overpopulation. An inadequately recognized problem of our time is to recreate conditions wherein healthy population controls shall be re-established. Here lies another major role of the small community. For the healthy, well-disciplined primary-group community has been perhaps the most effective area for such control. It is significant that this whole area of consideration has been largely omitted in the current discussion of the population problem.—Griscom Morgan.

More than four out of every ten non-farm families with incomes of \$5000 a year or more now live in small towns or rural non-farm areas. Only two out of every ten families in this class live in the large cities. Well-to-do families are evidently unwilling to put up with the inconveniences of life in great urban aggregations, and are moving to smaller communities to bring up their children.—*Family Life* (5287 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles 27, Calif.), October, 1948.

"Urban population of the U.S. has increased 12.7% since 1940 while the rural population has increased only 1.7%. Throughout history, the drift of population into large cities has invariably been disastrous to sound and normal family life."—*Family Life*, March, 1948.

*Since this article was written a letter has been received from Dr. Sushila Nayar, who has been Gandhi's personal physician in recent years. In it she writes: "Many people who share Baku Gandhiji's (Gandhi's) ideas feel that when the social and economic conditions improve, the birth rate will probably go down of its own accord. Today many people have no consolation—no outlet for their creative energies—except procreation."

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

A WORLD-VIEW FOR COMMUNITY

If we mean by *religion*, that which deals with the wholeness of life and its ultimate values, the secularization of life is synonymous with its disintegration. In this sense of the word the role of the church is not primary, for the church is only one of many instruments for religious purpose. an instrument that at times may even obstruct religious life.

Approached from this standpoint, religion is of crucial importance in adult education and in community life. The community, like the individual person, is a whole made up of many elements and processes that must be united into a higher order of being. Just as physiological processes are elemental to human life, but do not themselves provide what is characteristically human, so in the community economic and other factors are elemental necessities, but are significant chiefly as supplying the basis for transcending values of another order. Neither the individual, the community, nor the nation is an end in itself, nor as ends can they encompass the transcending values that make a community out of an aggregate of individuals. The tendency in the field of medicine to forget the whole personality and to give specialized treatment to individual symptoms has been ably criticized, as by Dr. Carl Menninger. The same tendency to forget the whole has similar harmful consequences in the fields of sociology, economics, religion, and education.

In focussing attention upon the area of the small community we seek to avoid the tendency to secularize life. The community is not the focus of all of life, but only a facet of it. We cannot simultaneously deal with life both as a whole and in detail, but we seek to maintain our vision of the whole in balance, and to treat of the parts in relation to the whole. Because we emphasize the small community it does not follow that we do not recognize world community, nor does emphasis upon adult education imply a disregard for secondary education. It is at times necessary to devote attention to the whole configuration of life and civilization and of the place of the community within it, instead of mere discussion of details and aspects of the good community.

In such an over-all setting we bring into perspective the necessary elements of the good life and in turn seek to show how the community relates to these other elements. Of primary importance among these elements is a world-view or religious orientation. *Community Service News* may not be a suitable place to deal at length with such a world-view. Yet such an orientation is fundamental to any undertaking. If we concern ourselves exclusively with means, those means may be put to evil as well as to good use. Thus the folk school has been found useful by communists and by Catholics alike.

It is with such considerations as these in mind that we mention here an essay, *The World-View of the Galilean*, by Griscom Morgan, in which an effort is made to develop a unifying life-philosophy and world-view consistent with modern knowledge. At the same time there is the aim to show its practicability

to the Christian tradition, not breaking its continuity, but demonstrating that the essence of Christianity, Jesus' own world-view, included a generally unrealized wealth of Hellenistic culture, with views of life that stand the light of modern criticism.

This essay, reprinted from the book just published by the Beacon Press, *Voices of Liberalism II*, is available from Community Service, Inc., for 25¢.

THE CHURCH AND THE DISORDER OF SOCIETY

Some recognition of the community as the source of social stability is evident in the following extracts from "The Church and the Disorder of Society: Report of Section III as adopted by the World Council of Churches, Amsterdam, Holland, September, 1948." The growth of good community life would greatly contribute to the aims presented.

"The world today is experiencing a social crisis of unparalleled proportions. The deepest root of that disorder is the refusal of men to see and admit that their responsibility to God stands over and above their loyalty to any earthly community and their obedience to any worldly power. Our modern society, in which religious traditions and family life have been weakened, and which is for the most part secular in its outlook, underestimates both the depth of evil in human nature and the full height of freedom and dignity in the children of God. . . .

"Two chief factors contribute to the crisis of our age. One of these is the vast concentrations of power—which are under capitalism mainly economic and under Communism both economic and political. In such conditions, social evil is manifest on the largest scale not only in the greed, pride and cruelty of persons and groups; but also in the momentum or inertia of huge organizations of men, which diminish their ability to act as moral and accountable beings. To find ways of realizing personal responsibility for collective action in the large aggregations of power in modern society is a task which has not yet been undertaken seriously.

"The second factor is that society, as a whole dominated as it is by technics, is likewise more controlled by a momentum of its own than in previous periods. While it enables men the better to use nature, it has the possibilities of destruction, both through war and through the undermining of the natural foundations of society in family, neighborhood and craft. It has collected men into great industrial cities and has deprived many societies of those forms of association in which men can grow most fully as persons. It has accentuated the tendency in men to waste God's gift to them in the soil and in other natural resources.

"On the other hand, technical developments have relieved men and women of much drudgery and poverty, and are still capable of doing more. There is a limit to what they can do in this direction. Large parts of the world, however, are far from that limit. Justice demands that the inhabitants of Asia and Africa, for instance, should have the benefits of more machine production. They may learn to avoid the mechanization of life and the other dangers of an unbalanced economy which impair the social health of the older industrial peoples. Technical

progress also provides channels of communication and interdependence which can be aids to fellowship, though closer contact may also produce friction.

"There is no inescapable necessity for society to succumb to undirected developments of technology, and the Christian Church has an urgent responsibility today to help men to achieve fuller personal life within the technical society. . . .

"On the one hand we must vindicate the supremacy of persons over purely technical considerations by subordinating all economic processes and cherished rights to the needs of the community as a whole. On the other hand, we must preserve the possibility of a satisfying life for 'little men in big societies.' We must prevent abuse of authority and keep open as wide a sphere as possible in which men can have direct and responsible relations with each other as persons.

"Coherent and purposeful ordering of society has now become a major necessity. Here governments have responsibilities which they must not shirk. But centers of initiative in economic life must be so encouraged as to avoid placing too great a burden upon centralized judgment and decision. To achieve religious, cultural, economic, social and other ends it is of vital importance that society should have a rich variety of smaller forms of community, in local government, within industrial organizations, including trade unions, through the development of public corporations, and through voluntary associations. By such means it is possible to prevent an undue centralization of power in modern technically organized communities, and thus escape the perils of tyranny while avoiding the dangers of anarchy. . . .

"Men must never be made a mere means for political or economic ends. Man is not made for the State but the State for man. Man is not made for production, but production for man. For a society to be responsible under modern conditions it is required that the people have freedom to control, to criticize and to change their governments, that power be made responsible by law and tradition, and be distributed as widely as possible through the whole community. It is required that economic justice and provision of equality of opportunity be established for all the members of society."

"The future of society must have its hope in the rural community. The rural areas are of increasing importance, because they are the seedbeds of our country's population; they are the areas in which Christian ideals, moral values, and standards of conduct and behavior of the highest type will be produced and maintained. It is here that democracy at its best and in its purest form can thrive.

"Our contention is not that the rural community of yesterday be restored after the fashion of a museum display, but rather that the rural community be enriched and modified in the light of new inventions and improved methods of living. The rural community of today needs to be revitalized, not left to stagnate and die."—J. Winfield Fretz, in *Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin*, April, 1948.

HOUSING

"The more new dwellings depart from traditional forms, the more imperative it becomes that they be put up in planned groupings rather than as isolated units. No matter how pleasing an individual Dymaxion or Quonset or X-space house may be by itself, it would be jarringly conspicuous if placed in a setting of conventionally designed houses. To show off to best advantage, the new models should be surrounded by others of the same type. . . .

"To the housing designer, this trend toward mass marketing of houses has important implications. As the government discovered during the war, good housing comprises much more than just houses. When schools, stores, or recreational facilities were lacking, or when too much time was required for workers to travel to their places of employment, housing projects were slow to fill up and sometimes even stood empty despite the congestion of population in war-production centers. The N.H.A. planners had to consider the addition of community services and amenities. . . .

"When housing is viewed as an integral part of the problem of planning neighborhoods and communities, it becomes clear that individual dwellings should be designed to conform with the most desirable patterns of community activity as well as individual family activity. What these larger patterns should be—the interrelationship between the house and other structures in the community—is a matter that likewise calls for scientific investigation.

"Our cities and towns have grown by stretching haphazardly out into the countryside, leaving the older central areas to wither and rot. . . . The gridiron streets and blocks, originally intended for horse-and-buggy transportation, have been long outmoded. Only with great difficulty and at large cost have a few new auto highways been superimposed to relieve the traffic bottlenecks. The airplane brings new planning difficulties before the older ones have been solved.

"Approximately 35 percent of the houses now being built in this country are going up on outlying land beyond the reach of municipal water-supply and sewage-disposal systems. This percentage is expected to double within the next year as builders find it increasingly difficult to obtain suitable land at reasonable prices inside the city limits and are forced to go farther and farther out."—C. Theodore Larson, from "Toward a Science of Housing" in *The Scientific Monthly*.

Houses for Family Living (Woman's Foundation, 10 E. 40th St., New York 16, 35¢). A study based on the findings of 52 architects, builders, anthropologists and others. "The experts envision tomorrow's home as a basementless, atticless, one-floor house without the specialized rooms of today. Instead it will have a flexible 'pattern of spaces' capable of change according to the changing needs of the family. Apartment living is denounced as 'offering nothing to a growing child and little for his parents.'"

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

The following is from a letter to the editor in *The Councils' Clarion* (Montreal Community Councils Committee, 1421 Atwater Ave., Montreal 25, Canada):

"I read with much interest the article entitled 'The Community League Movement in Edmonton, Alberta,' in the June issue of the *Councils' Clarion*. I think Edmonton is to be congratulated on the fact that it has twenty-seven Community Leagues, but more especially because it has a Federation of those Leagues. Strong representation in a central body which can present a united front and speak with one voice for the people of a city seems ideal to me.

"Further on in the article I note that the League, generally speaking, is the senior organization in the community, but for the most part has made no attempt to coordinate the activities of other groups in the community and does not recognize the work being attempted by them. Doesn't this show a need for a coordinating body and provide an excellent opportunity for reorganizing the League into a real Community Council as the author himself suggests might be done?

"I do not agree, however, that 'To create a Council brings another organization into the field.' As I understand it a Community Council is *not* just another organization, but a coordinating body which does over-all planning for the entire community, channeling the operations of projects and programs to its member organizations best suited to handle them.

"I do agree that 'The field is often littered with the half-done jobs of too many committees, groups and organizations being run on a shoestring of too few doing the work for too many.' I would say that it is high time a Community Council got on its job of clearing up the litter. Granted, existing organizations make this Council task very difficult because they are jealous of their autonomy. I might add that too many individuals are also jealous of their positions. In my opinion, there are too many one-man shows.

"Here again is an indication of the work to be done by a Community Council—that of the education of citizens, teaching us the true meaning of cooperation and community spirit, convincing these 'guard-our-own-autonomy' groups that to become a member of a coordinating Council is not to lose their identity but to strengthen their hand by the united support of many others.

"Canadians have still much to learn about good citizenship, unity and co-operation, and I feel that a true Community Council can contribute immeasurably to the education of citizens of this Dominion in a concrete and practical way."

"Community Center Planning" is the title of a series of bulletins covering many phases of the subject, issued by the Adult Education Division, Department of Education, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. It is the best publication we have seen on the subject.

REVIEWS

Community Education in Action: A Report on Community Organization and Adult Education, American Assn. for Adult Education, 525 W. 120th St., New York 27, 59 pages, 50¢.

Adult education, more than any other field of education, has concerned itself with the community setting of life as well as with the means and techniques by which to live. The Committee on Community Organization of the American Association for Adult Education is composed of some of America's most competent leaders in these fields. Their report gives evidence of a high level of competence in bringing the subject of community organization and action in effective relation to adult education as it is conceived in America.

In the fields of adult education and of community this pamphlet is at once a survey and summary of experience and a creative achievement pointing the way to future action. The report grew out of the analysis of many individual cases of successful community organization. It thus demonstrates ways and means by which the resources and needs of a community can be brought into balance, ways in which adult education and community must work together.

The study is divided into six parts and a bibliography: Approaches to Community Organization (summarizing 24 examples); Community Needs and Resources; Balancing Needs and Resources, especially through educational action; What Makes for Good Community Organization?; and the contribution and role of adult education.

A majority of the community organizations that were analyzed in this report were in the nature of community councils. The discussion of councils in terms of educational methods of balancing needs and resources appears to us misleading in some of its implications. Although the council is spoken of as the "correlating and integrating device," it is appraised primarily as an educational device, which is quite different. In this appraisal it is said that "The Jordan Area council is a good—though extreme—example [of adaptation to changing conditions]. When the council as an organization had served its purpose, it quietly went out of existence." The purpose of correlating and integrating is a continuing one, and the reason why the Jordan Area council "quietly went out of existence" apparently is that the foundation that had created it withdrew its financial support.

In discussing representation on the community council, the committee appears to have disfavored as "impractical and deadening" the idea that the members of the council should be chosen by the various civic organizations. One reason for this seems to be the failure to clearly differentiate between the representation of welfare agencies and the representation of general community organizations. Also, in support of this objection to organizational representation an adult education council is cited, a case in which coordination of what organizations are doing is not so much called for.

The community council benefits from having its members chosen by civic organizations because this method provides the council with a truer cross-section of the real community. Where members of a public body are elected by vote of the community a certain type of person is repeatedly chosen. In case of selection for council memberships on the basis of interest or calling another particular type tends to congregate. The selection of members of a community council by civic organizations—such as churches, P.T.A., veterans' groups, labor and businessmen's organizations, League of Women Voters—brings together a more varied cross-section of the community which can more fully realize its full and varied resources.

A general handicap of this study is its professional viewpoint. Just as a similar group of able and leading ministers in considering community organization and the church would be almost bound to have a rather clerical perspective, the authors of this booklet share the outlook characteristic of the professional world in which they live and work.

In many areas of life the more highly perfected the conventions of an art or profession, the more convincing they become, however arbitrary they may be. Adult education in America increasingly faces this hazard. This is particularly true with regard to its dominant interest in leadership. While distinctly superior to most adult education literature in this regard, this report shows a definite weakness here.

Recently several Englishmen have independently made the comment on their visits to America that in twenty or thirty years in England they had not heard so much about leadership as they had heard in two or three months in America. The professional and land-grant college approach to social problems, to adult education, and to community organization shows the attitude of a governing class or bureaucracy toward the people.

With regard to this problem the *Report* has some excellent comments to make; "Organizing a community to support some good cause which has not been selected or developed by the people who are asked to support it is not community organization in the sense of this study. Furthermore, the relation of such activities to true community organization raises questions which are yearly more acute, for they are a part of our serious dilemma about broad planning and centralization versus local initiative."

The democratic adult educator is thus concerned over the paradoxical situation in which he finds himself, and casts about for means by which to avoid that paradox, by which to disclaim the role of the leader and yet continue in the role of professional sparkplug of social organization and movement. It is commonly felt that the way to avoid violating the democratic principle of popular sovereignty is by turning to local leadership to initiate and carry out the programs planned from above.

The Committee on Community Organization has recognized that community organization should be in part an outlet for ■ desire to act arising from

successful adult education. Yet the burden of its report carries in it the concept of the community as the "guinea pig," expressed in the excellent context of the statement, "If there is anything new which is common to most of the more recent developments, it is the consideration of the 'wholeness' of the community which is the guinea pig."

To the committee the "community" is not the neighborhood or primary group within which motives, real acquaintance, and understanding may prevail. That is too small a group for professional leadership to cope with. Rather, the "size of the area included (in the projects studied) seems to have little relation to the process pattern evolved." By their definition of community ("sharing geographical and common interests") and by their examples, the community becomes the impersonal mass of the city or county rather than the personal relationship of the primary-group community. It is in such impersonal relationships with masses that consideration of leaders becomes so dominant, and the social service profession so important.

Even where the report treats of the most vital influence of adult education upon community organization its consideration of the primary group is barely inferred: "Adult education can help community organization by increasing the general level of understanding in the community," and "Adult education can help community organization by supplying a reservoir of active participants in community organization." Reference has been made to the increasing distrust of governmental agencies. Community organization, as such, inevitably shares that distrust even with a large participation of lay leadership. For safe grounds for trust depend upon primary-group relationships within which mutual confidence and understanding must grow. It is not community organization, but rather community itself, that we stand so greatly in need of. And in proportion to the community's vitality it may find expression in appropriate organization.

It is our opinion that because community must be based upon primary-group relationships, adult education's major contribution must be the enlightenment of the primary group and its members. Such face-to-face educational associations as the residential people's college and the neighborhood study group build the intimate personal acquaintance upon which a wider area of community and its organization may soundly grow. Occasional meetings and temporary classes out of a working day, bringing together people who have not other primary-group associations, is not the most effective way to build community. Nevertheless, this is one of the best treatments of the subjects we have seen from the standpoint of the adult education movement.

The reason that the city fails to be a true community is that there is no permanent and vital interest which holds the people together. The city, in spite of its common organization, is a colony of quasi-communities and interest groups rather than itself a community group.—John E. Boodin, *The Social Mind* (New York, Macmillan, 1939), page 58.

COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES

Purcell Weaver writes from Canada (57 St. Edmund's Drive, Toronto): "I returned from England some weeks ago. On behalf of the Robert Owen Foundation I am making a survey of rural cooperative (intentional) communities, cooperative group farms, workers' productive cooperatives, and industrial co-partnerships in Canada, in order to see what the future policy and program of the Foundation might be. Its activity has been much reduced since the death of its founder, Henri Lasserre, in 1945.

"At the same time I am hoping to make or renew contacts with other organizations in Canada and elsewhere which have the same or similar objectives. Since the cooperative community movement in Canada is very small, I have in mind the possibility that the Robert Owen Foundation, or some other organization, might act as a Canadian clearing-house for information not only on cooperatives of the types mentioned, but also on community in its wider aspects, decentralization, etc."

Word has been received from Lucille J. Rouse that the Minneapolis group which was planning the formation of a comprehensive cooperative community (see Sept. Oct. *Community Service News*, page 118) has moved to 7607 West Norton Avenue, Los Angeles 46, California.

"Here at Primavera are more than five hundred people of different nationalities whose lives are devoted to a peaceful, brotherly way of living. Over eighty families and a number of unmarried men and women live and work in community. All property is held in common, as it was among the early Christians. Each one works to the utmost of his or her strength and ability, and receives in accordance with his or her need, what the simple means of the community can supply. No wages are paid. All work is done voluntarily, the urge to work being the social, economic and religious need of our time.

"We are expecting the arrival soon of one hundred and thirty displaced persons from the U.S. Zone of Germany. Among them are a number of destitute widows with their children. We are building houses for them and clearing more forest-land to cultivate it for their food. Other people from various countries, including the United States, have expressed their intention to come to live and work with us, and several young North Americans have already arrived.

"Here is a constructive task to be done, and people and means are needed to do it better. We should welcome letters from men and women among your readers who want to help us to build a brotherly order of society and to experience community life for themselves. We should also be glad to hear from people ready to help financially with the burden that providing for so many newcomers has placed upon us. We invite inquiries from interested friends and will gladly give them more detailed information."—Sociedad Fraternal Huteriana, Primavera, Alto Paraguay.

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

November 13. Annual Meeting of members of Community Service, Inc., Yellow Springs, Ohio. Program includes discussion of community centers and recreation centers and their functions, with Joe J. Marx, Henry Federighi, and Arthur E. Morgan.

November 22-24. National Conference on Government sponsored by the National Municipal League, Boston, Mass. Address National Municipal League, 299 Broadway, New York 7.

December 2-4. Rural Life Association, annual conference, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana. Leaders include Eugene Smathers of Big Lick, Tenn.; I. W. Moomaw of Agricultural Missions, Inc.; Baker Brownell of Northwestern University.

December 20-31. Seventh Seminar on the Major Problems of Living, Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Registration in charge of Marie Nelson, Brookville, Ohio. Leaders include Ralph Borsodi, Mildred Jensen Loomis, Earl C. Kelley, George Geiger, Clarence Leuba, and M. N. Chatterjee.

ARTHUR E. MORGAN TO SERVE IN INDIA

Arthur E. Morgan, President of Community Service, Inc., has been appointed by the Government of India as one of two American members of a commission to survey Indian higher education and make recommendations for its future course. Dr. Radhakrishnan, the Indian philosopher, is chairman of the commission. John Tigert, formerly U.S. Commissioner of Education, is the other American member, and the commission also includes Sir Richard Livingstone, Vice Chancellor of Oxford University. Mr. and Mrs. Morgan plan to leave by plane from New York on November 23, and to be away nine months.

Community Service News bound volumes are now available, as follows: Volumes II-III (1944-45) in one binding. \$4.25; Volumes IV-V (1946-47) in one binding. \$3.75.

The following reprints of articles by Arthur E. Morgan are available from Community Service, Inc.: "How Scandinavia Tries to Stabilize Small Business; With Suggestions for an American Program," 50¢. "A New Rural Pattern," 10¢. "Social Stability Is a State of Mind," 10¢.

"The Family Log," by Kenneth S. Beam, Director, San Diego County Coordinating Councils, 6108 Civic Center, San Diego, California. A guide to keeping family records of various kinds.

WHAT EARTH IMPOSES

Extract from the "Country Chronicle," The Progressive, November 25, 1946

By Henry Beston

Now comes November and a colder sky, something of the vast silence of Winter in the air.

It is a time for rustic satisfaction. The great earthy and outdoor tasks of the farm are over and done, and on these cold nights when a rising wind rattles at the windows and the ragged clouds sail across the moon, we know in our warm kitchens what will presently come down upon us from the solitudes of the north. Strengthened and provisioned like fortresses we are, fortresses of the life of man in the beauty and glare and sunshine of the snow. In this region we call our preparation for the siege—and the phrase is ancestral—"housing up." The women of the farms now put in order the rooms that will not be used, stripping the beds and folding up and laying away the blankets, placing chairs to one side, and carefully putting such things as might be breakable into a bureau drawer. These deserted chambers have a magnetic quality of attracting to their chilly emptiness all sorts of things which must be kept at a proper temperature, baskets of winter pears, for instance, and late-ripening apples, and even jars of jelly put aside to "set" awhile.

It is the task of the men to see to the state of the house and barn, make repairs, and check on the primary supplies. The screens have come off, some willingly, some obstinately, the storm doors put on, the double shutters fitted, two more cords of wood stacked, and the pond water-system drained and the great pump greased and laid up for the winter.

However various may be the tasks which man is given to attend to upon this earth, his major occupation is a concern with life. To accomplish this duty, he must honor life, even if he honors it but blindly, knowing that life has a sacredness and mystery which no destruction of the poetic spirit can diminish. The curtain has just rung down on a great show and carnival of death and the air is still poisoned and we are poisoned. Our strength and intelligence have been used to counter the very will and purpose of the earth. We had better begin considering not what our governments want but what the earth imposes.

Great poetry is born from life, not from books. As has often been remarked, it took more than a century to get skylarks out of American poetry. The same is true as to the seasons. In England spring is the glorious season; in America it is the autumn. Yet American poets still habitually sing of the spring and ignore the fall. Too many of our poets have been urban, living and writing out of books. Burns' poem, "To a Mouse," could have been written only by one who had followed the plough.—Arthur E. Morgan